

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently amended) A method of measuring the extent of resources provided by a second computing device to a first computing device in a distributed network, said first computing device being in data communication with a first trusted entity, and said second computing device being in data communication with a second trusted entity, wherein the first computing device is operated by a first user and wherein the second computing device is operated by a second user, said method comprising the steps of:

(A) receiving at a resource usage verification authority (RUVA) server, from the first trusted entity, information about an intended resource use, wherein said intended resource usage relates to a transaction for downloading a file to said first computing device;

(B) responsive to receiving said information at said RUVA server, the RUVA server conducting a redundancy check for said transaction and determining whether (a) said file has already been downloaded, in whole or in part, to said first computing device, or (b) said file has been previously requested by said first computing device, or (c) a resource usage ticket has already been issued for downloading the same file to the first computing device; and,

(C) based at least in part on said redundancy check, said RUVA server setting a weighting factor for said transaction, said weighting factor indicating to what extent value should be awarded for the transaction, and wherein, when said transaction is determined by said redundancy check to be redundant, the weighting

factor is set to a value that indicates that any compensation or reward associated with the transaction should be given less than full weight;

(D) [(B)] providing a ticket, from said RUVA server to the first trusted entity, said ticket including at least portion of said information, and said ticket including an indication of said weighting factor for said transaction;

(E) [(C)] transmitting said ticket from the first trusted entity to the second trusted entity;

(F) [(D)] the second trusted entity modifying the ticket to produce a modified ticket, said modified ticket being based at least in part upon actual resources provided by said second computing device to said first computing device related to said transaction;

(G) [(E)] said second trusted entity transmitting said modified ticket to the first trusted entity;

(H) [(F)] said first trusted entity transmitting the modified ticket to the RUVA server; and

(I) [(G)] said RUVA server utilizing said ticket and said modified ticket to determine the extent of resources provided by the second computing device to the first computing device related to said transaction; and

(J) allocating compensation or rewards related to the transaction to said second user based at least in part on (a) said indication of said weighting factor for the transaction, and (b) the determined extent of resources provided by the second computing device related to said transaction.

2. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the resources provided by the second computing device related to said transaction include at least one of ~~provision of a file~~, provision of bandwidth, provision of CPU cycles, and [(or)] provision of disk or memory storage.

3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the ticket issued by the RUVA server comprises at least one of a machine identification field, a field for a file name for the file, a field for a hash of the [[a]] file, a field for a randomly generated number, a weighting field for said indication of said weighting factor, a time field, a value field, [[or]] and a date field.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the RUVA server stores a copy of said ticket.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the second trusted entity validates the ticket by checking that the ticket has been signed by the RUVA server.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising said first trusted entity validating the ticket.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of the RUVA server authenticating the identity of the first trusted entity prior to issuing said ticket.

8. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein said first trusted entity is a module incorporating authentication, encryption or data signing capabilities in data communication with a computing device.

9. (original) The method of claim 7 wherein the first trusted entity comprises a receipt request generator, receipt generator module, and receipt validation module.

10-11. (Canceled)

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of modifying the ticket by the second trusted entity comprises at least signing or authenticating the ticket.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12 further comprising the step of the first trusted entity validating the signed ticket.

14. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of modifying the ticket by the second trusted entity comprises adding details of the extent of resources shared by the second computing device for said transaction, said details including at least one or more of: the time taken to transfer the file from the second computing device to the first computing device, and the amount of data transferred from the second computing device to the first computing device as part of said transaction.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of said first trusted entity organizing a plurality of tickets into a record and communicating said record to the RUVA server.

16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15 further comprising the step of determining, from said record, the extent of resources provided by a

plurality of second computing devices to a plurality of first computing devices and modifying a database to record the extent of resources provided by said plurality of second computing devices to said plurality of first computing devices.

17-37. (Canceled)

38. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said RUVA server signs said ticket prior to providing the ticket to the first trusted entity, the method further comprising the first trusted entity validating said ticket prior to transmitting the ticket to the second trusted entity.

39. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the second trusted entity validates the ticket prior step (F) [(D)].

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39 wherein the second trusted entity validates the ticket by checking for a signature from the RUVA server.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising: said RUVA server authenticating the first trusted entity.

42. (canceled)

43. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 [[10]] wherein said redundancy check comprises
a check that the [[a]] transaction ~~being attempted by said first computer~~ has not been repeated.

44. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10 wherein the redundancy check is performed prior to providing said ticket.

45-46. (canceled)

47. (Withdrawn) A method of measuring the extent of resources provided to a first computer by a second computer in a distributed network, said network including a resource usage verification authority (RUVA) server, said method comprising the steps of:

- (A) associating a first trusted entity with the first computer;
- (B) associating a second trusted entity with the second computer;
- (C) receiving at said RUVA server, from the first trusted entity, information about an intended resource use by said first computer;
- (D) said RUVA server providing a ticket to the first trusted entity, said ticket including at least portion of said information;
- (E) transmitting said ticket from the first trusted entity to the second trusted entity;
- (F) the second trusted entity modifying the ticket, said modification being based at least in part upon actual resource use;
- (G) said second trusted entity transmitting said modified ticket to the first trusted entity;
- (H) said first trusted entity transmitting the modified ticket to the RUVA server; and
- (I) said RUVA server utilizing said ticket and said modified ticket to determine the extent of resources provided by the second computer to the first computer; and

(J) allocating value to said second user based upon said determination of the extent of resources provided by the second user.

48. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the network comprises a peer-to-peer network.

49. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 48 wherein the first computing device further comprises a peer-to-peer client application.

50. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 49 wherein the first trusted entity is integrated into the peer-to-peer client application.

51. (canceled)

52. (Currently amended) A method of measuring the extent of resources provided by a second computing device to a first computing device in a distributed network that comprises a peer to peer network, said first computing device having a first resource usage verification module ("RUVN"), and said second computing device having a second RUVN, said first RUVN and said second RUVN being trusted entities, wherein the first computing device is operated by a first user and wherein the second computing device is operated by a second user, said method comprising the steps of:

(A) receiving at a resource usage verification authority (RUVN) server, from the first RUVN, information about an intended resource use, wherein said intended resource usage relates to a transaction for provision of a file to said first computing device;

(B) responsive to receiving said information at said RUVA server, the RUVA server conducting a redundancy check for said transaction, the redundancy check determining one or more of:

(a) whether said file has already been provided, in whole or in part, to said first computing device; and

(b) whether said file has been previously requested by said first computing device; and

(c) whether a resource usage ticket has already been issued for downloading the same file to the first computing device; and,

(C) based at least in part on said redundancy check, said RUVA server setting a weighting factor for said transaction, said weighting factor indicating an extent to which value should be awarded for the transaction, and wherein, when said transaction is determined by said redundancy check to be redundant, said weighting factor is set to a value that indicates that any compensation or reward associated with the transaction should not be given full weight;

(D) [(B)] providing a ticket, from said RUVA server to the first RUVN, said ticket including at least portion of said information, and said ticket including an indication of said weighting factor for said transaction;

(E) [(C)] transmitting said ticket from the first RUVN to the second RUVN;

(F) [(D)] the second RUVN modifying the ticket to produce a modified ticket, said modified ticket being based at least in part upon actual resources provided by said second computing device to said first computing device related to said transaction;

(G) [(E)] said second RUVN transmitting said modified ticket to the first RUVN;

(H) [(F)] said first RUVB transmitting the modified ticket to the RUVB server; and

(I) [(G)] said RUVB server utilizing said ticket and said modified ticket to determine the extent of resources provided by the second computing device to the first computing device related to said transaction; and

(J) allocating compensation or rewards related to the transaction to said second user based at least in part on (a) said indication of said weighting factor for the transaction, and (b) the determined extent of resources provided by the second computing device related to the transaction.

53 (New) The method of claim 52 wherein the resources provided by the second computing device related to said transaction include at least one of: bandwidth, CPU cycles, and disk or memory storage.

54. (New) The method of claim 52 wherein the ticket issued by the RUVB server comprises at least one of: a machine identification field, a field for a file name for the file, a field for a hash of the file, a field for a randomly generated number, a weighting field for said indication of said weighting factor, a time field, a value field, and a date field.

55. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein the weighting factor is set to a value to minimize or negate any compensation or rewards associated with the transaction.

56. (New) The method of claim 52 wherein the weighting factor is set to a value to minimize or negate any compensation or rewards associated with the transaction.

57. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein , when said transaction is determined by said redundancy check not to be redundant, said weighting factor is set to a value to provide full compensation or reward associated with the transaction.

58. (New) The method of claim 52 wherein , when said transaction is determined by said redundancy check not to be redundant, said weighting factor is set to a value to provide full compensation or reward associated with the transaction.